

region from all levels of government are in charge of the national response in the coming days.

Congress must look at the coming months and years.

Toward that end, last week, the Speaker and Senator FRIST announced their intention to create a bipartisan, bicameral, select committee of senior Members and Senators to review and report findings about the preparations for and response to Hurricane Katrina. Isolated partisan attacks of the bipartisan committee notwithstanding, it will allow and require the Congress to do its constitutional duty to review the recovery and the policies that govern it.

The joint select committee will work, as even its shrillest critics must know.

Meanwhile, this week, the House is at work developing targeted policies for the ongoing national response, from a bill to protect Katrina's good Samaritans from predatory trial lawyers, to a bill to encourage more charitable giving to the Katrina private relief effort by providing targeted tax relief for the contributors to the recovery.

These and other policies will be brought to the floor as they are ready so that the House can respond as quickly and as effectively as possible.

Our entire Nation has its work cut out for it, recovering from this tragedy. The House will meet its responsibility, in the aftermath of this emergency, to lead.

CREATING A CABINET-LEVEL DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, from our deepest silence, from that place within each of us that knows peace, from our heart of hearts which connects us to the world and to the heart of the world, we know that fear leads to violence, that violence leads to war, that war leads to total destruction. Yet we do not want to fear, we do not want violence, we do not want war, we want peace. We desire peace so intensely that we are willing to do almost anything to achieve it, including spending half of our resources for arms to help feel secure.

We know we cannot continue on this perilous path of seeking peace through violence. We know that this approach offers our children no future at all.

So today we make a new beginning with House bill 3760, legislation to create a Cabinet-level department of peace and nonviolence. In doing so, dozens of Members of this Congress announced that we choose courage over fear and hope over despair. We announce our desire to create a new America and a new world.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY ACT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, sexual predators lurk in the shadows of our neighborhoods and prey on those who are innocent and defenseless. Many sex offenders are living under the radar of local law enforcement and continue to elude the criminal justice system.

But we are bringing forth legislation that strengthens the critical need of protecting the safety of our children. H.R. 3132, the Children's Safety Act, addresses the growing epidemic of violence against children and enhances their safety from convicted sex offenders through coordinated State sex offender registration and notification programs.

One of the most crucial problems is that over 100,000 sex offenders are "missing." They have not complied with sex offender registration requirements. This legislation remedies this crisis by ensuring compliance and enforcement.

Child exploitation and sexual abuse are a growing predicament. This bill tightens mandatory minimums for crimes of violence against children. It expands the category of crimes to include juvenile sex offenses, possession of child pornography, and a new definition of sex offense.

It is time to shed light on this most egregious crime and tighten the outlets sex offenders use to desecrate our world.

HURRICANE KATRINA ACCELERATED TAX BENEFITS ACT

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, as we consider tax incentives for businesses that have been affected by Hurricane Katrina and help them get up and running, we must also help the affected families get up and running. Both are essential endeavors.

Americans have lost their homes and incomes through no fault of their own.

In the coming days, I will introduce the Hurricane Katrina Accelerated Tax Benefits Act. This bill will fast-track the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, and educational incentives such as the Hope and Lifetime Learning Credits to the people in the Gulf Coast, providing these hard-working Americans with much-needed resources. It will stimulate the economy and help rebuild the lives of affected Americans.

These Americans who have lost so much should receive their tax refunds now. They have worked for it, and they have earned it.

There is a precedent for fast-tracking tax refunds during times of crisis. Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Congress passed legislation to fast-track the Child Tax Credit refunds.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot undo the damage wrought by Hurricane Katrina, but we can begin to restore lives. By taking these steps, we can quickly deliver the funds to these families who have worked hard and paid taxes.

I hope my colleagues will join me in advancing this important legislation.

HOMELAND SECURITY VERSUS FOREIGN AID

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it is the desire to be frugal that led the Base Closure Commission to recommend the retirement of the 147th Fighter Wing from Ellington Field in Houston, Texas.

The removal of these aircraft would severely weaken the military's ability to protect the City of Houston, NASA, the Port of Houston, the Port of Beaumont, and Port Arthur. It is for that reason that I have introduced House Resolution 412 which calls for the President to work with the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure that any base closings do not affect homeland security inadvertently.

Mr. Speaker, we should reevaluate our foreign giveaway programs if we want to save money. When homeland security is at stake and the energy capital of the world is potentially without fighter protection, the penny pinchers need to reevaluate their priorities.

Like every mother tells her child, "safety first." So we need to keep the F-16s flying over Southeast Texas and the energy capital of the world.

GAMING INDUSTRY'S RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, as millions of people lost their homes and their jobs, the casino and gaming industry in the Gulf Coast region is helping them in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

I applaud the American Gaming Association for setting up the Gaming Industry Katrina Relief Fund to raise money to provide disaster relief and assistance to gaming employees in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Gaming companies have created programs to help their employees after the devastation of the hurricane. Among other relief efforts, Harrah's Entertainment has established a \$1 million Employee Recovery Fund and is paying employee wages for 90 days, Boyd Gaming is paying employees for 8 weeks, and the MGM Mirage has established a call center and paycheck distribution center in Biloxi.

The gaming industry is taking care of their employees in the areas ravaged by the hurricane. As usual, the industry has stepped up to the plate to help their employees weather the storm and